

Food prices

Language

Economics, trends

Level

Intermediate to upper intermediate (equivalent to CEF level B1–B2)

Comment

This eLesson is about the causes and effects of the rise in global food prices. It allows students to engage with a major global issue and helps them to build up their vocabulary for describing trends.

How to use the lesson

- 1 Introduce the topic of rising food prices. If possible, put some food items on your desk and get students in groups to guess how much they cost. Then ask them how much the same things cost last year.
- 2 Give out the worksheet. Students read the text to complete exercise 1. Encourage them to read quickly to improve their skimming skills. In feedback, consider asking students to answer the four questions in exercise 1 in their own words (by summarising the text).
- 3 Exercise 2 gives students detailed reading practice. Make sure they understand clearly the difference between *cause* and *effect* and do an example together with the class. In feedback, check the pronunciation of *biofuels*, *economic* and *population*.
- 4 Exercise 3 gives students more detailed reading practice. Encourage them to underline in the text where they found the answer, so that in feedback, students can explain their answers. Check the pronunciation of *drought*.
- 5 In exercise 4, students need to search for verbs in the text related to increases and improvements and then fill in the missing letters in the eight words. Tell the students the words are not in the same order or in the same form as in the article. Do the first one together as an example – it's in the second paragraph. If you wish, make this a timed game. The class could applaud the first student to find all of the words.
- 7 Students could do exercise 5 in pairs or small groups. It gives them more practice in the verbs for increases and improvements, which they found in exercise 4. In feedback, you could point out that 3 is *expand* because *rise* can't be followed by an object; 6 is *climb* because *soar* is too strong and 8 is *risen* because we say that crime goes up, because it can be measured as a number, like inflation and costs. As a follow-up, you could ask students to choose some of the verbs and write some sentences about their own town, school etc.
- 8 Students discuss the questions in exercise 6 in small groups. As a homework project, students could record how much they spend on food during the next week and discuss this in a future class – or they could interview some people locally to find out how rising food prices are affecting them and write a summary in English.

Reading eLesson

Answer key

1

- 1 para 4
- 2 para 2
- 3 para 3
- 4 para 1

2

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1 E | 4 E |
| 2 C | 5 C |
| 3 C | 6 C |

3

- 1 F (it was in the last half of 2010)
- 2 T
- 3 F (they have reduced supply)
- 4 T
- 5 F (100 million extra people have been pushed into hunger, in addition to those already suffering from hunger)
- 6 T

4

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| 1 soar | 3 upgrade | 5 grow | 7 rise |
| 2 enhance | 4 climb | 6 expand | 8 develop |

5 Possible answers

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|-----------|
| 1 upgrade | 3 expand | 5 enhanced | 7 develop |
| 2 soaring | 4 grown | 6 climb | 8 risen |
- 6 Students' own answers.

Related websites

The following websites might be useful, for either yourself or your students.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-12119539>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-11177214>

<http://www.wfp.org/> (World Food Programme)

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/foresight/our-work/projects/current-projects/global-food-and-farming-futures/reports-and-publications> Global Food and Farming futures (UK Government Report)

<http://www.fao.org/isfp/isfp-home/en/> (United Nations report)